He also added that a Director of Industries might be appointed to instruct the people in the manufacture of the several articles imported into the country out of the available local raw produce, and start and develop many industries in the State.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

14. The hardships and inconveniences caused to the people by the Excise Department and suggestions for remedying the same.

Mr. K. C. Govindan (Member, Nominated) pointed out that, while tobacco was planted and cultivated in several parts of India, it was regrettable that the entire quantity of the stuff required for consumption in Travancore was being imported from Jaffna, Tinnevelly and Coimbatore. Quoting the statistics for the import of tobacco into the State during 1088 and 1089, the Member observed that the use of tobacco was appreciably on the increase from year to year. In view of the importance of tobacco as an article of trade and also having regard to the large profits to outside merchants by the trade, the Member requested that the prohibition to cultivate tobacco in the State should be removed and that the cultivation should be encouraged, especially in places where the plant would thrive.

Like tobacco, ganja too was once cultivated in different parts of the State. The quantity of ganja imported into the country was also steadily increasing, and therefore the Member requested the Government to start and encourage the cultivation of the plant in suitable localities within the State.

As regards salt, the Member pointed out that, originally the whole quantity of salt required for local consumption was produced in the State. He advocated the complete abolition of the import of Bombay and Tuticorin salt and the encouragement of the local production of salt to meet the full local demand.

The Member next proceeded to consider the excise system of the State, and pointed out that the evils of the system were the following:—

(1) it had almost completely discouraged the tapping industry which constituted the life-work of an important section of the people in the State;

(2) the system, although it professed to discourage drinking, did not only not achieve that end, but was showing contrary effects; and

(3) so far as the excise offences were concerned, the conduct of the cases by the departmental officers and the magistracy was unsatisfactory.

He said that, with the introduction of the patta arrack, the tapping industry had gone down in the State to the great loss of the people engaged therein and of the Government revenue. The profit to the Government for every gallon of patta arrack was Re. 1 chs. 5 c. 6 and that for the toddy arrack was Re. 1 chs. 15 c. 6. In 1089, about 14 lacs of gallons of spirits, consisting of jaggery and toddy arrack, were consumed. If the whole quantity were toddy arrack, the profit to the Government would have far exceeded the amount they actually obtained in the year. He said that there was no ground for the apprehension that, with the introduction of toddy arrack, the consumption of spirits would decrease, for the actual percentage of the consumption of toddy arrack in the State in 1089 was far in excess of that of jaggery arrack.

The Member then went into the statistics for 1088 and 1089 and he argued that the consumption of country and foreign liquor was steadily on the increase and that the new excise system had not succeeded in discouraging the very pernicious habit of drink in the country. The consumption of jaggery arrack was fraught with serious consequences to public health and the policy of the Government to encourage the manufacture of patta arrack in preference to the less injurious toddy arrack was very objectionable.

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The Member then examined how the administration of justice was carried on in respect of excise cases. He said that it was disastrous that, while even in regard to police charges the percentage of conviction was only 32, the percentage was 95 in respect of excise cases charged before the magistracy. In Alleppey and Devikulam, all the cases charged ended in conviction. In the opinion of the Member, justice was blindly and arbitrarily administered in so far as excise cases were concerned and it was high time that the Government started an enquiry into that important matter.

In conclusion, the Member requested that, so far as the Excise administration was concerned, it was desirable to take action on the following lines :—

(1) Toddy arrack should be sold in preference to jaggery arrack.

(2) The price of liquor should be enhanced so as to discourage drinking.

(3) Distilleries should be established in all taluks where the manufacture of arrack was carried on and the contract for the supply of toddy arrack given to the people of the State.

(4) Greater facilities should be afforded for the manufacture of jaggery,

(5) The import of foreign liquor should be discouraged by raising the duty thereon.

(6) Stringent instructions should be issued to the Magistracy to ensure the same even-handed justice being meted out to the public in excise cases as in other cases.

Dewan's reply.—The Member's representations will be referred to the Excise Commissioner for report.

15. The inconvenience caused to the inhabitants of the southern group of pakuthies of the Quilon taluk owing to the absence of a fish-curing yard.

Mr. C. Raman Tampi, B. A., B. L. (Member, Quilon taluk) said that, during three months of the year, namely, from Edavom to Karkadagom, much inconvenience was caused to the inhabitants on the Quilon sea-coast from the foul smell emanating from fish indiscriminately dried by the fishermen. Right along the sea-coast from Quilon to Paravur, the process was conducted on a very large scale. In spite of their best efforts, the Quilon T. I. C. were not able to do much towards minimising the nuisance and danger to public health. He therefore prayed for the establishment of a regular fish-curing yard at Tangacherry, Quilon or any other suitable place in the taluk. The Member said that he was aware that a yard was lately opened at Muttam and that it was reported to be not very popular. In his view, that was due to the unsuitability of the locality selected for the experiment, and he felt sure that a yard, if opened in the Quilon taluk, was bound to be a success. He therefore requested that the matter might receive the early consideration of the Government.

Dewan's reply.—The operations of the fish-curing yard at Muttam will be watched before other yards are opened.

16. The necessity for certain amendments in the Tobacco Rules.

Mr. Kora Kochu Korula (Member, Trading Classes, Kottayam) observed that, under the Tobacco Rules dated the 5th July 1913, the wholesale vend of tobacco was prohibited in certain taluks of the State except under a license, a licensed retail vendor should not have in stock more than 10 lbs. of tobacco at a time, and certain officers of the Excise Department were competent to issue free licenses for the retail vend of tobacco. The Member suggested that the prohibition in regard to the wholesale vend of tobacco without license should be extended to all parts of the State. The restriction that a licensed retail vendor should not have in stock more than 10 lbs. of tobacco at a time would, in his opinion, give rise to foul play and corruption both on the part of the vendors as well as the subordinate officers of the department. He

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